SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HON. HENRY FLOOD,

IN THE

HOUSE of COMMONS

OF GREAT BRITAIN,

FEBRUARY 15, 1787,

ON THE

COMMERCIAL TREATY with FRANCE.

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SPEECH, &c.

Mr. SPEAKER,

I DO not wonder that the Right Honourable Member, (the Chancellor of the Exchequer,) did not preface his reſolution with any argument. He referred to what he had offered on a former day, upon the general merits of the Commercial Treaty, of which this reſolution is a part; and, indeed, as that Treaty muſt be taken or rejected, in the *whole*, it is clear, that each of theſe reſolves muſt be determined, not ſo much on its own diſtinct and ſeparate merits, as by a conſideration of the Treaty at large. Hence it is that in ſpeaking to the preſent propoſition, I feel myſelf obliged to ſpeak my ſentiments as to the whole of the Treaty, and in doing ſo, I promiſe that I will not utter a word which I do not think; and that what I do think I ſhall utter as briefly as I can.

My firſt principle is this, that Great Britain and France are and will continue to be *rivals* *. The fact ſpeaks itſelf with a thouſand mouths; and if authority were wanted, as an auxiliary to fact, I would appeal to an authority, great with all men,

* Monſieur Calonne, in his official Speech, delivered in the name of the King, calls Great Britain the *rival* of France.

and omnipotent with ſome; I mean the authority of the late Lord Chatham. Some of the laſt public words of that Great Man, on the ſubject of France, were theſe: "*France is a power which I muſt ever* "*regard, with an eye of national jealouſy, with a rooted* "*diſtruſt, and unalterable alienation of mind.*" I conſider myſelf therefore as authorized to aſſume, that Great Britain and France are, and that they will continue to be *rivals:* and rivals of what ſort? not merely rival merchants, but rival potentates alſo; that is to ſay, that commercial conſiderations are their ſubordinate, and that imperial conſiderations are their primary objects. Though therefore Commerce had no ſpirit of rivalry in itſelf, (and who will ſay that it has not,) yet, between two ſuch countries, it muſt become a part of the *national conteſt*, and cannot therefore extinguiſh, though it may inflame their rivalry. What follows? that if this Treaty were compleatly equal between both kingdoms, as to Commerce merely, it would in effect be commercially of no value to either, becauſe the commercial relation of the two rivals would remain, as to each other, the ſame.——But it would not follow that the ſituation of Great Britain, as to other countries, would remain the ſame, either in a commercial or in a political conſideration. On the contrary, it will be clear, that the ſituation of Great Britain would, in both, be injured, as to other countries; and by conſequence that the whole of her relative ſituation as to France would be injured alſo. If this be founded, what follows? that though this Treaty were completely equal between the two kingdoms as to Commerce, yet it would be ineligible—How much more ſo, if, commercially, it is advantageous to France, and detrimental to Great Britain? On one ſuppoſition only it could be admiſſible—that is, if the advantage of the Treaty were

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greatly on the ſide of Great Britain and againſt France. Even in that caſe it might be queſtioned perhaps whether ultimately it would be wiſe. For what would happen? France would ſoon ſee her error, and would extricate herſelf from it, though at the expence of a war—and that for this plain reaſon—that by her government ſhe is more prone to, and that by alliances ſhe is more prepared for war than Great Britain. What follows from this ſituation? That if this Treaty be beneficial to France, ſhe is more likely to retain the benefit of it; and if it be prejudicial, more likely to emancipate herſelf from the evil than we are.

That the advantage of the Treaty, however, is greatly on the ſide of Great Britain and againſt France, is not much contended for, nor is it even plauſibly ſuſtained; but that the reverſe is the caſe, is at leaſt a probable conjecture. For, firſt, it is notorious that France has been long prepared and long eager for this diſcuſſion, and that we were neither. We did not therefore negotiate upon equal terms; and, on equal terms, we are not equal negotiators. It is not natural for men to believe that the maxims by which they have permanently flouriſhed are abſurd and erroneous—Neither is it natural for them to believe that two enlightened nations have, for a century, contemplated the ſame object in one view; and that both of them, for a century, have been completely miſtaken. Yet all this muſt be admitted, before we can admit, that opening the ports of theſe two kingdoms to each other is not advantageous to France and prejudicial to Great Britain.

I will not repeat what has been fully ſtated, that this Treaty is the progeny of thoſe of 1677 and of 1713.—I will not repeat that the Treaty of 1677 was dictated by France, to the ignominious King

who then diſhonoured your throne.——That even a penſioned parliament rejected it, and ſubſtituted protecting duties and prohibitory laws—That James the Second, when he wiſhed to conciliate France, and to enſlave England, re-opened the ports—That King William and the Revolution barred them up again—That from the Commercial Ignorance of our negotiators in 1713, (confeſſed by themſelves) the Treaty of Utretcht, (as to that part of it, by which the ports of the two kingdoms were to be opened to each other) was alſo dictated by France—That the Parliament, though generally obſequious to the Queen, reprobated that part of that Treaty—That all wiſe men and all ſubſequent Parliaments, to this day, have applauded their conduct;—I will omit theſe conſiderations, though weighty and undeniable; but, what happened in 1763?—Amidſt all her calamities and conceſſions, France ſtruggled for this principle with peculiar avidity. The ſituation of Great Britain was commanding, and rather than not have a Peace at all, France receded. What happened in 1783?—France returned to this principle with equal ardour. The ſituation of Great Britain was not equally commanding. But though the principle was not peremptorily rejected as before, yet neither was it admitted. It was referred to future diſcuſſion—that is in fact, it was evaded. And what then are we deſired to do now?—To admit a principle, which, for an hundred years, France has been importunate to obtain; and which, for an hundred years, Great Britain has been reſolute to refuſe; which would have made the Treaty of 1763 worſe than it was, when it was thought to be inadequate to our glory; and which would have made the Treaty of 1783, worſe than it was, when it was thought to be too humiliating, even for our diſtreſs.

Again, whenever the ports of theſe kingdoms have been opened to each other, what has been the *fact?*

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Has there not been a tremendous balance in favour of France?—When the ports were ſhut, have we not recovered?—When they have been re-opened, have we not relapſed?—And ſince the barrier was reſtored at the Revolution, has not the balance altered, ſo that France now aſſerts that it is become unfavourable to her.—Now, if this be ſo, I ſay firſt, that we ought to be content. Next, I ſay, ſo alſo ought France; becauſe ſhe is more than compenſated, by our abſentee expenditure—Whereas, were the balance againſt us, we ſhould have no ſuch compenſation. The Right Honourable Member, it is true, has objected to the ſtatements and facts, to which I have now alluded; but to what effect?—He has ſaid, and he has ſaid truly, that there were at that time contrary ſtatements and aſſertions in contradiction—But when did it ever happen otherwiſe, when an unhappy conteſt has at any time been inſtituted by power againſt truth and reaſon?—But ſuch conteſts cannot laſt—time will give the victory to truth—And in this caſe the Right Honourable Member does confeſs that he believes the balance to have been at thoſe times unfavourable to Great Britain. Whether therefore it were ſo in the degree in which certain partiſans have ſtated it, it is not worth our while to conſider. The eſſential fact is admitted.

What follows? France began to be a manufacturing country in the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, and in the adminiſtration of Colbert. Now if the infancy of her manufacture was dangerous to Great Britain, is it not abſurd to ſuppoſe that its maturity is not ſo?

It is much boaſted indeed, that the Manufacturers are pleaſed with this Treaty. As however, when they were diſpleaſed with the Iriſh Treaty, their ſtrongeſt and moſt expreſs diſapprobation was thought immaterial by miniſters; their ſurmiſed

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ſatisfaction in this Treaty now cannot be argued by the ſame men, as weighty in its favour. When I look upon your table, however, I ſee no application from any Manufacturers in favour of this meaſure—but I do ſee there a petition from a Chamber, containing various claſſes of Manufacturers, againſt it; for ſo the petition certainly is, as far as it reaches. It is true, it is on the face of it, a petition only for time and deliberation; and therefore it is ridiculed; with what reaſon, I ſee not. What elſe could they have done with equal propriety? In ſo few days after the completion of the Treaty, to call on you to give an inſtant and undeliberate negative to a meaſure comprehending every ſtate as well as every Commercial conſideration, would certainly have been cenſured as premature and preſumptuous. How much more abſurd and preſumptuous would it have been to deſire you to give an inſtant negative, where, they neither had as yet, nor could have becomingly given a negative themſelves? —But I will not refer to what the Manufacturers may think, or to what they may talk, which is doubtful; but to what they have publickly reaſoned, of which we can judge, and to what they have ſworn, which we muſt credit.—On the Iriſh Treaty, they gave evidence, and till they come to your bar to retract that teſtimony, I have a right to the benefit of it; and if the Manufacturers were now ſtanding at your bar, I would aſk them—Were they afraid of Ireland at that time, and are they not afraid of France now? And if any one of them ſhould anſwer in the affirmative, I would aſk him, what could be his poſſible reaſon? Is it that France is one of the moſt induſtrious, enterpriſing and manufacturing nations in the world; and that Ireland is not ſo?—Is it, that France has all labour, and Manufactural labour in particular, cheaper than Ireland? Is it, that France has five times the

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territory, eight times the population, and forty times the capital of Ireland?—If England had committed an error in her Treaty with Ireland, were they afraid that ſhe could not rectify the error without a war?—whereas, with France, are they ſure it might not coſt a war? If Ireland ſhould have gained in the event, were they afraid of it; becauſe it would have been the gain of fellow-ſubjects and of the empire; and as to France are they not afraid of it, becauſe it will be the gain of our rival, and therefore a loſs to the empire? Theſe opinions are too abſurd to be credible.

Of the Woollen Manufacturer, I would aſk, whether in dyes, in oils and in Spaniſh wool, France has not advantages which Ireland had not; (nor Britain either?) Whether France does not rival Britiſh woollens, in many parts of the world, whereas Ireland did not? Whether France has not one hundred towns engaged in the Woollen Manufacture for one that can be reckoned in Ireland? And whether France ſends either Wool or Woollen yarn to Great Britain; whereas Ireland ſends both; whilſt Great Britain ſends neither to Ireland, whatever ſhe may to France? I would aſk of the Cotton Manufacturer, whether in the raw material, France has not many advantages which Ireland had not, (nor Britain herſelf?) Of the Iron Manufacturer I might demand what mighty advantages had Ireland to render her more formidable than France? And I might aſk Mr. Wedgewood himſelf, if no other country could rival his Manufacture, why he was ſo much afraid of Ireland? and if any other country can, why he is not at all afraid of France?

As to the Wines and Brandies of France, it is evident that by her climate ſhe has in them a phyſical monopoly of expenſive luxuries, for which it is her intereſt to ſecure the richeſt and moſt luxurious

urious conſumer that ſhe can, namely, Great Britain—Whereas Ireland could have no ſuch object in a Treaty with Britain, nor Great Britain with France. And here I might aſk, not of Manufacturers only, but of all mankind, whether neceſſaries will not make their way without treaty, and even, in ſpight of prohibition, where ſuperfluities will not make their way? I would then deſire it to be remembered, that the exports of France to Great Britain are moſtly luxuries, and next to luxuries; and that our exports to France are moſtly utilities of the firſt or ſecond neceſſity? What follows? That our exports ſtand leſs in need of treaty, and leſs in fear of prohibition than thoſe of France: and therefore that treaty is advantageous to France. In what inſtance indeed is there a genuine reciprocity? Our people will ſubmit their inclinations to nothing but to the law of the land, but in France there is another law, the law of faſhion and of the court. What follows? After you ſhall have rendered the laws of the land, in both kingdoms as reciprocal as you can (in which there are ten thouſand difficulties, and in which if you could ſucceed, you would benefit your rival) there will ſtill remain to France this law of the court, by which ſhe can laugh at your reciprocity. If we ſay that this communication with France will endanger our Manufactures, what is the anſwer? "that they cannot be endangered "for that France is poor." If we ſay that this Treaty will not be beneficial to Great Britain, what is the anſwer? "That it muſt be advantage-"ous to us becauſe France is rich." Which of theſe poſitions is to be abandoned? Now if this Treaty will be beneficial to us in proportion as France is rich, how much more advantageous muſt it be to France if Great Britain is ſo much more rich? If both kingdoms were equally rich what would follow?

follow? That that country muſt be the moſt benefited, that was the leaſt expenſive and the leaſt luxurious. Now I aſk any man, whether Great Britain, as a nation, is not more expenſive and more luxurious than France? No man can doubt it; what follows? That France muſt be a gainer by this Treaty in a twofold proportion; firſt, becauſe Great Britain is richer, and next, becauſe ſhe is more expenſive and more luxurious. Again, as to machinery and implements, if it is ſaid that the Cotton and other Manufactures will be in danger, what is the anſwer? "That they are perfectly "ſecure, for that France has not the utenſils nor "machinery of Great Britain." Now either France has them or ſhe has them not. If ſhe has them, the argument is a ſuicide, and if ſhe has them not, what does it prove? That our protecting laws have been efficacious, and therefore, that we ought not to part with them.

What is the object of a Commercial Nation? Not to be for ever buſy in ſupplying other countries, and to leave itſelf to be ſupplied by them. That would be abſurd. Its firſt object is to ſupply itſelf; its ſecond only is to ſupply others. What follows? That two great *neighbouring* countries of *Manufacture*, can never be capital objects to each other, and that for this plain reaſon—that they muſt have the greateſt quantity of ſimilar commodities; the greateſt quantity of home ſupply; and therefore the ſmalleſt quantity of reciprocal wants. No axiom can be clearer than this. And therefore the Right Honourable Member, (the Chancellor of the Exchequer,) who always ſtates what is ſtrongeſt for his cauſe, did argue, that a profitable exchange might take place between theſe two countries—And why? Becauſe France, he ſaid, is a country of *Produce*, and becauſe Great Britain is a

country of *Manufacture*. Now this is true in ſound, but falſe in reality.—To make it true in reality, it would have been requiſite to add, that the produce of France is a produce neceſſary or uſeful to Great Britain; whereas it is luxurious as to Wines, and as to Brandies it is miſchievous. It ought alſo to be added, that France is not a country of Manufacture:—that is to ſay, that ſhe is unable to ſupply herſelf with Manufacture; becauſe in that caſe it is likely that ſhe would conſume ours. But this is ſo far from being the truth, that ſhe manufactures enough, not only to ſupply herſelf, but to acquire an annual balance of Bullion, much larger than any other country in Europe.—We alſo, it is true, manufacture enough not only to ſupply ourſelves, but to obtain a yearly balance in ſpecie, though not equal to that of France; that is, France manufactures enough for twenty-four millions of people, and we manufacture enough for eight millions.—I will not however infer from thence, that ſhe manufactures three times as much as we—I mean to reaſon fairly—And therefore I admit, that eight millions of our people conſume more manufacture than eight millions, but not more than twenty-four millions of Frenchmen. Now, if the *quantity* of her Manufacture, is at leaſt equal to the quantity of ours, we can only ſurpaſs her in *quality*. And, though even in quality ſome of her Manufactures excel ours, yet I am willing to ſuppoſe, that as to quality, we excel her in more. But what does this conclude as to the home conſumption of France?——Nothing at all—As long and as far as, from poverty, from œconomy, or from nationality and prejudice, ſhe is content with her own Manufactures, ſhe will not conſume ours. She could only import them for the uſe of other countries. Now does any man ſeriouſly wiſh to make France

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the medium of our Commerce with other countries, and to give up an active for a paſſive trafic? To give all the advantages of freight, commiſſion, correſpondence, and the preference as to the raw materials or uſeful produce of thoſe other countries in return to France; inſtead of England? And to make her the mercantile factor for Great Britain? —Can any man entertain ſo inſane an idea?—Is any man ſo blind as not to ſee how much that would put this country into the power of her rival in peace, and of her enemy in war?—What a wound it would enable France to give to this kingdom upon the outſet of hoſtilities? Or how difficult it might be, in ſuch circumſtances, to induce a mercantile people, like the Engliſh, to endure ſuch a ſhock; and not rather to ſuffer the baſeſt indignities that could be heaped upon a nation?— As to any idea therefore of wiſhing that France ſhould be the medium of our Trade with other countries, I hold it to be utterly inadmiſſible; and as to any little encreaſe in her own conſumption of our commodities, it is nonſenſe to conſider that as a capital object.—The great objects to ſuch a country as this, are thoſe countries which are deſtitute of Manufacture, but rich in Bullion or in neceſſary or highly uſeful commodities. Spain, from defect of induſtry, and from abundance of Bullion, is ſuch an object.—Holland, from defect of territory and from commercial opulence, is ſuch another. The Northern kingdoms are objects from a plenty of commodities of the firſt or ſecond neceſſity.— Both the Americas are objects.—Portugal is an object—But look round the world, and perhaps you will not find many countries that are leſs objects to Great Britain than France—I mean of uſeful Commerce; and to negociate for unuſeful, or for pernicious traffic, would be too abſurd. Now as to

moſt of theſe countries that are capital objects, France has the advantage—Spain, is to France, as France herſelf.—Both the Americas, as allies to France, or as ſubjects to Spain are favourable to France.—Holland has fallen under the protection of France; in Weſt Indian Iſlands France is ſuperor; in Africa not inferior;—in Italy, in the Mediterranean and in Turkey, ſhe is ſuperior; in Germany and the North, ſhe is equal.—And this Treaty may put her upon a level with us as to Portugal.—Now, if her ſituation be thus advantageous with reſpect to Great Britain herſelf, how much greater muſt her ſuperiority be when compared with the ſituation of Ireland?—What then can be more abſurd, than to ſay, that if Ireland were formidable to the Britiſh Manufactures but the other day, that France is not formidable to them now? But if any Manufacturer ſhould ſay, that I miſtake the whole of that matter; that the teſtimony then given, was political and not ſincere—that the real motive to it was this, that Ireland had for a century given every thing to the Britiſh Manufacturer that ſhe could give; and that therefore they oppoſed giving thoſe terms to Ireland, which they are ready to give to France for conceſſions ſo infinitely inferior to thoſe which they have ſo long obtained from the ſiſter country.—If any manufacturer ſhould hold ſuch a language, I ſhould not heſitate to rebuke him publicly, and to call down the indignation of Parliament upon him, as an infamous traducer of the Britiſh Manufacturers, and of the Britiſh Name.

I will therefore no longer aſk the Manufacturers what they do think, for I know what they muſt think, but I would aſk the Negociator of this Treaty, upon what principle he acted in theſe two tranſactions. He owed a public faith and a perſonal grati-

gratitude to Ireland. Yet he thought that ſyſtem ſo pernicious to Great Britain, and ſo much too advantageous to Ireland, that he was amongſt the foremoſt to oppoſe it. He concurred in ſtipulating an eminent addition to the original countervailing principle of that ſyſtem—namely—that not only all bounties on export ſhould be countervailed, but all internal gratuities, by the Linen Board, by the Dublin Society or by any other aſſociation of men in Ireland. Now I aſk, has he in like manner ſtipulated a countervailing duty in his French Treaty, for the important liberalities which the king of France diſtributes ſo largely and in ſuch a variety of ſhapes to different manufacturers. If it be ſaid that he could not limit the bounty of an independent prince; I anſwer that, that Prince is the legiſlature of France, and that therefore his gratuities were as juſtly reſtrainable, as the bounties of a Britiſh, or of an Iriſh Parliament. If not, there is no reciprocity; and if there be no reciprocity, there ought to be no Treaty. Again, I aſk him, after all the correctives which he helped to adminiſter to the Iriſh Treaty, and which he has forgot in France, did he not ſtill hold that that Treaty was ſo favourable to Ireland, that ſhe could ſcarcely pay enough for it? And what price did he demand? A perpetual ſubſidy to the Britiſh navy; a perpetual monopoly of the Trade of Ireland, as to great part of Africa, as to the whole of Aſia; as to the Weſt Indies; many reſtrictions as to the Thirteen States of America; and a perpetual adoption of Britiſh Navigation Laws. Yet the preſent Treaty he has given to France without any ſuch price, without any ſuch condition, and without any ſuch monopoly; nay, not ſo much has he required, as the advantage of one Manufacture, (though ſuggeſted by his predeceſſor in the negociation;)

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not one in counterpoiſe for the wines and brandies of France, for which we have no equivalent commodities—No—not one, in place even of that Tobacco, which the Treaty of Utrecht itſelf had given to Great Britain; but which has been ſince ſubtracted by France together with America—I will not aſk what could be the reaſon for this aſtoniſhing diſparity; becauſe no ſufficient reaſon can poſſibly be given—for one of two things is undeniable,—either that common juſtice was not done to Ireland in the former tranſaction; or that, in this, common juſtice has not been done to Great Britain.

If I be told that the Manufacturers of Ireland were nearly as adverſe to that Treaty, as the Manufacturers of Great Britain, I admit it, and upon the ſame principle—a principle which I ſhould not now mention, but that it bears fully and directly upon the preſent ſubject: Now what was that principle? That the *certainty* of the Home Market is better than the *chance* of any other. Great Britain had protected her Market for a century, and at the end of that century they ſaw how ſhe flouriſhed. Ireland had not been permitted to protect her Market, during the ſame period, and at the end of it they felt how ſhe ſtood impoveriſhed. Spain had adopted, during about the ſame period, a ſyſtem contrary to that of protection, and in ſpight of Peru and Mexico, it had beggared her. The Market of the world is a great thing in ſound, but, in reality, the Home Market is to every country greater than that of all the reſt of the world, and as to Great Britain, this is peculiarly true. One illuſtration will prove it. The corn of Great Britain is encouraged in its foreign conſumption by a bounty on its export. Yet though thus forced into the Foreign Market, What is the proportion of

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the foreign to the home conſumption of Britiſh Corn? Not one part in thirty-two. I know however that corn, being a firſt rate neceſſary of life, is in greater conſumption at home, and in greater production abroad, than leſs neceſſary commodities; and therefore (meaning to reaſon fairly) I do not ſtate the diſproportion between the home and the foreign conſumption in all things, to be as great as it is in that particular commodity; but after having rendered the idea ſtriking by this example, I will by another and a ſhort illuſtration, render it preciſe. Every man muſt ſee this.—That if the Home Conſumption were equal to the whole produce of the national induſtry, Foreign Conſumption would be of no value to Britiſh Induſtry.—What follows? That Foreign Conſumption is only worth to Britiſh Induſtry, that ſum, by which the *exports* of Great Britain *exceed* all that ſhe *imports* for *Home Conſumption*. The Home Conſumption, it is evident, is equal to all the reſt, ſaving the ſum of that exceſs——Now compare that exceſs with the national conſumption of eighty or ninety millions; and the immenſe ſuperiority of the Home Market of Great Britain, over that of all the reſt of the world, will be apparent. What follows? That it would be abſurd to hazard all this for the chance of the Market of one foreign country; and eſpecially of France, that is ſo peculiarly capable of ſupplying herſelf.

Beſides the extent of the Home Market, there is a ſteadineſs in it that is invaluable. The caprice or hoſtility of foreign powers may make great and ſudden revolutions in the Foreign Market. But the Home Market, if we are wiſe, we can always depend on, for ſteadineſs, and in effect for monopoly. Reflect on the immenſe expence to which we have gone for diſtant colonies. And why? Was it not for

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the ſake of their monopoly? though, in diſtant colonies, that muſt always be imperfect. How abſurd then would it be to relinquiſh the monopoly of the Home Market, which is ſo much more perfect and ſo much more extenſive than that of all the colonies in the world?

What is the profeſſed object of this Treaty?—That by taking the Wines and Brandies of France we ſhall induce her to take our Manufactures; that is, by taking an expenſive luxury in her Wines, and a miſchievous one in her Brandies, we ſhall bribe her to take our uſeful and neceſſary commodities. Now who does not ſee that the man who gives things uſeful or neceſſary, for things that are neither neceſſary nor uſeful, makes a loſing exchange? Who does not feel that it is not wiſe in an induſtrious country, to encourage and inflame the ſpirit of unneceſſary and luxurious importation; and who does not know that an encreaſe of French Imports, can be nothing elſe than an encreaſe of luxurious and unneceſſary import?——And if it be not wiſe in any country to encourage ſuch Imports, is it not folly in a country that is deeply in debt; and madneſs in a country whoſe exiſtence depends upon an artificial capital like ours? For what is the boaſted ſtrength and ſecurity of Great Britain at this moment?—Is it not the ſuperiority of her capital?—Yet in what does that conſiſt? Not in ſpecie undoubtedly—for in ſpecie France is far ſuperior to us—It conſiſts then in paper and in credit—that is in artificial capital—but this ſyſtem of paper and credit, and this artificial capital cannot be maintained, without a given quantity of ſpecie; and that given quantity of ſpecie cannot be preſerved, but by a favourable ballance of trade, to which luxurious and unneceſſary importation muſt always be adverſary. Conſider then that the balance of your

trade

trade has not been on the encreaſe for ſome years: Conſider what the amount of that balance is now, reflect that you muſt deduct from it the intereſt paid to foreign creditors in the funds; that you muſt deduct from it the remittances made to your abſentees all over the world; that China exhauſts no ſmall portion of it; and you will ſee that there is not much to ſpare for unneceſſary and luxurious, that is, for French Importation; if you mean to preſerve any overplus at all, to ſupply the channels of circulation, which are neceſſary to move the machine of credit.

One word as to increaſe of Navigation and Marine in conſequence of this Treaty. If France is to become in any degree the carrier of your trade by it, it muſt encreaſe her Navigation and her Marine, and muſt diminiſh yours. If ſhe is not, then the whole will be confined to the trade between theſe two kingdoms. Now, as this conſiſts of ſmall and high priced articles carried acroſs a narrow channel, it can never be of conſequence in point of Navigation. As to illicit Trade, of which, at the beſt, much muſt remain, that is all carried on at preſent by Britiſh Veſſels. After this Treaty, however, to evade the Hovering Act and the vigilance of Revenue Officers, it will be carried on by French Veſſels, and therefore it may in ſome degree encreaſe French, but cannot in any degree encreaſe the Britiſh Marine, or Britiſh Navigation.

Upon the whole, that this Treaty will be injurious to us, as far as reſpects France, ſeems to me to be ſufficiently proved. What then will be its operation as to other powers? Either in conſequence of it, you will take more from France, or you will not. If you will not, then the object of the Treaty vaniſhes and is loſt; if you do, you

muſt take leſs ſomewhere elſe—That is, either you muſt take leſs from your own Manufacturers, which will hurt your Trade immediately, or you muſt take leſs from other countries, which will hurt your Trade conſequentially, becauſe, as far as thoſe countries can, they will take the leſs from you. Suppoſe even that the encreaſe in French Conſumption ſhould equal the diminution every where elſe, you will be no gainers—that is plain—but on the contrary, you will be at an eminent diſadvantage; and why? Becauſe your Trade will for ſo much depend on the cuſtom of a rival, inſtead of relying on that of neutral or of amicable nations; or, inſtead of relying upon your home conſumption, which is the ſureſt dependance of all. Now in common ſenſe, when we are ſpeaking of independent nations, what is a rival? Is it not a natural enemy? And what is a neutral power? In commerce, and comparatively ſpeaking, is it not a natural friend? Now what can be more abſurd than to rely on a natural enemy rather than on a natural friend; or at all, to put either of them in balance with yourſelves?

Again—by this Treaty you bind yourſelves, if you lay any burden hereafter on the French Trade, to lay the ſame burden on that of all other countries; and if you grant any privilege hereafter to any other country, to grant the ſame privilege to France alſo. I remember well that Oliver Cromwell obtained from Sweden a ſtipulation of this ſort, but Sweden did not obtain the ſame ſtipulation from Oliver Cromwell. He ſaw it was an advantage for England to *get*, but by no means to *give*. I do not ſay that your negotiator could have obtained ſuch an advantage over France. But if he could not get an advantage, he ought not to have given one. Now, in this he has it is evident. Such a ſtipu-

a ſtipulation is an anticipation of all future compacts with other countries. That is manifeſt.—What follows? That it is moſt injurious to that country that has the moſt future compacts with other nations to make. Now certainly that is Great Britain. Again, who does not ſee that, free as you are at preſent, you might grant various privileges to various nations, which would be valuable to them if not participated by France; but which, if ſhe partook, would ceaſe to be of value to them? Who does not ſee alſo, that a burden which would not be felt by the Trade of France, might be highly injurious to the Trade of other kingdoms? In theſe reſpects therefore, this Treaty puts you into a worſe ſituation with other powers. Univerſally is it not clear, that the freight between Great Britain and France is cheaper than that between Great Britain and moſt of the neutral and friendly powers of the world? What follows? That this is an univerſal bounty upon the Trade of France, againſt that of all neutral and amicable nations. If to this it be ſaid, that France does the ſame by you, I anſwer, that to gain ſuch an advantage over ſuch powers ought not to be your aim ſo much, as to preſerve your ſuperiority over France. What follows from this principle? That ſuch part of Trade or of Marine, as you cannot occupy yourſelves, it is better for you to ſee divided amongſt a number of neutral or amicable nations, than to ſee it concentered in one hand, eſpecially in the hand of your rival.

But perhaps the worſt part of the ſtipulation is the exception which it contains. Two nations are excepted as peculiarly favoured, Spain on the part of France, and Portugal on that of Great Britain. Need I to mention the advantage which France poſſeſſes in this exception; an advantage as great

as the immenſe ſuperiority of Spain over Portugal. But is this all? Far from it. France is ſure of Spain, and you are not ſure of Portugal. On the contrary, this very Treaty puts an end to the Metheun Treaty with Portugal. It is true indeed, that you have reſerved a power to renew it. But you cannot renew it with equal advantage to Portugal. That is one certainly; and another is, that you can never expect an efficient connection with Portugal, except ſo far as you are oppoſed to, and ſo far as you are amatch for, the Houſe of Bourbon. Nothing therefore could be more unfortunate than the mention of Portugal in my mind. Nothing elſe could have given even French dexterity an opportunity to obtain a Britiſh ſanction for that family-compact of the Houſe of Bourbon, which Lord Chatham thought to be an adequate cauſe for a declaration of war; and entertained that conception with ſuch force and energy that he reſigned all his power, becauſe the cabinet would not concur in it.

One thing at leaſt I think is clear, that France was one of the laſt countries in Europe with which you ought to have engaged—yet by this Treaty you will make her the firſt, though ſhe has taken care not to make you ſo. What is the conſequence? She can now do againſt you, what you cannot retaliate againſt her. She can uſe her influence with Spain. Is ſhe not doing it?—With America, is ſhe not doing it?—And in every other country with which ſhe communicates, to prevent them from entering into engagements with you. How eaſily can ſhe prevail on them to inſiſt upon preliminaries to which you cannot accede; and yet, to which if you do not accede, they will not negotiate. What follows?—A decline of communication between you and thoſe powers. And what follows from that?—

That

That what thoſe powers muſt import from you, they will chuſe to import indirectly thro' France, rather than directly from you. Thus, for ſo much, ſhe would become the medium and carrier of your trade; a circumſtance, in my mind, devoutly to be deprecated. What is at preſent your confidence as to America? Is it not, that ſhe muſt return to you for the ſake of that long credit which France cannot afford to her. But what will be the operation of this Treaty? It will give Engliſh credit to France in the firſt inſtance; and in the ſecond, France can give it to America. Thus it will deprive you of your only advantage as to America, and transfer it to your rival, who has every other advantage. Thus it will cement the connexion between France and America, and perpetuate the diſconnexion between thoſe ſtates and Great Britain, whilſt in Europe it will rivet the confederacy between France and Spain, and unrivet that between Great Britain and Portugal, if it does not even add it, as a link, to the chain of the Houſe of Bourbon. As to Ireland, what is its policy?—It ſhews more favour to France than was ſhewn the other day to Ireland. And what does it do next?—It ſends France into Ireland, to colonize in her towns; to line her Weſtern coaſt and the Atlantic; to become the medium between certain claſſes of her people and America; to encourage emigration in peace, and ſeparation in war. Now turn your eyes to the Eaſt. What did France do in 1748?—She made the Treaty of Aix la Chappele, and the day after ſhe fortified in America —— The day after this Treaty ſhe will fortify in Aſia.——What will follow? If ſhe cannot rival your Cotton Manufacture in Europe, ſhe will undo it in Aſia. She will admit Aſiatic Cottons free from Duty. She can do it, without even an infraction of this Treaty; for even that has not been guarded againſt by your nego-

negotiator——but ſhe cannot do it without the ruin of your European Manufacture.—Would not this be an acceptable meaſure in Aſia, I aſk?—if ſhe were to contend with you for Bengal, (which one day ſhe will,) could ſhe do it upon a better foundation? With her intrigues among the Aſiatic powers; with the connivance or co-operation of the Dutch; recruited and fortified as ſhe then would be, might not your Aſiatic Empire tremble? Is it ſo ſecure in its nature as to bid defiance to aſſault? Or is any man ſo credulous as to believe, that to the glory of having ſtripped you of America, ſhe would not wiſh to accumulate the renown of depriving you of Aſia too?—I am no reviler of France. I honour her genius.—I honour her activity; but whilſt I honour France, I am devoted to Great-Britain. Time and circumſtances have made us rivals; let us be as generous rivals as you will; but let us not be counterfeiting friends.

It is nonſenſe to believe that the nations of the world have renounced their competitions; or that Great Britain and France are the only nations in the world that have done ſo. If competition and aſpiring between theſe two kingdoms be at an end, it is but within a very few years that they have been extinguiſhed. Now what have been the ſymptoms of this revolution of ſentiment on the part of France? Was it the ambitious league of the Houſe of Bourbon? Was it her uſurpation of Corſica? Is it her protection of Holland? Or was it her ſupport of America? Did ſhe ſupport America, I repeat, becauſe Great Britain was not her rival?—Does ſhe protect Holland now? Does ſhe advance her own marine in preference to her army? Is the firſt oſtentatious exhibition of her monarch at Cherbourg? Is Dunkirk to riſe from ruins, and the whole coaſt oppoſite to Great Britain to aſſume a

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countenance of menace? Is all this, becauſe France is no longer a rival to Great Britain? No, but for the very contrary reaſon—becauſe the continental powers are no longer conſidered by France as her rivals; becauſe a maritime power is held to be her only rival, and becauſe Great Britain is that maritime power; for what other maritime power can it be? That a Commercial Treaty can alter this, it is folly to ſuppoſe. Kingdoms ſuch as France purſue Commerce for power, and will never ſacrifice power to Commerce. Did your Commercial Compact with Holland prevent the maſſacre at Amboyna?—No—but it cauſed it.—Away then with theſe paradoxes which inſinuate that France was a benefactreſs to Great Britain when ſhe ſtripped her of America, or that ſhe will more than compenſate it by opening her ports to us in Europe. For if the Trade to America was ſo diſadvantageous, becauſe it was diſtant, how much more diſadvantageous muſt that to Bengal and China be, which are ſo much more diſtant? And if a near market be ſo much the beſt, why hazard the neareſt market in the world, which is the Home Market?

To talk therefore of making France the moſt favoured nation by Great Britain, appears to me to be abſurd; and to make her ſo at preſent, to be diſhonourable too. What muſt the nations of Europe think of it?—They know, that in the glory of the Duke of Marlborough's victories, you rejected the principle.—They know that in the triumphs of 1762, you rejected it—and if now, in the freſh diſmemberment of your empire by France, you ſhall for the firſt time ſubmit to it, they will not impute it to gratitude—They will not impute it to the philoſophy—I dare not ſay, to what, they may impute it. Heretofore they muſt acknowledge,

ledge, that, though you may, ſometimes, have been unfortunate, yet you never were depreſſed. You have ſtood, (as your own Baillie did in Aſia,) preſenting a front to every danger: ſo that nothing, but an exploſion from Heaven, could undo you. But if they read this Treaty, they may think that day is over. And if they ſee you recede from the other countries of Europe to bury yourſelves in the embraces of France, they may imagine, that you have deſerted that ſtation which you have maintained in Europe. Now I aſk, can you deſert that ſtation? And I anſwer that you cannot—firſt, becauſe it would be inglorious; and next, becauſe it would be unſafe. The moment that you were to let fall that ſtandard, it would paſs to ſome other power, and you would ceaſe to be the hope, and ceaſe to be the pride, of Europe. The enemies of your former greatneſs would purſue your retreat, though they would ſtand aloof from your power. The nation that has once dared to be great, has no ſafety in littleneſs; ſhe muſt continue her darings, or ſhe will ſuffer the pains of puſillanimity.

No man glories more than I do in the mighty exertions of this great nation, in the laſt war, whilſt no man more laments the principle and the event of it. But I am not ſo credulous as to believe that our failure has rendered us more formidable to France. On the other hand, I ſee no reaſon to deſpond. For if Queen Elizabeth, amidſt all her diſtreſſes, could place this country at the head of Europe, as the common friend to juſtice, and as the common enemy to oppreſſion—if Oliver Cromwell, with the ſtain of Uſurper on his head, could continue this kingdom in the ſituation in which it had been placed by Elizabeth—And if both of them, could do this, without the aid of

America

America——I do not ſee why we ſhould deſpond now.

With theſe glories before my eyes, and remembering how nobly they have been augmented within theſe hundred years, I ſtand in aſtoniſhment at the preamble of this Treaty, which calls on us, in a tone of triumph, to reverſe the ſyſtem of that century. I cannot help aſking myſelf who theſe men are who thus ſummon a mighty nation to renounce its honours and to abdicate its ſuperiority. But be they who they may, if they aſk me to depoſe Great Britain, and to put France into the throne of Europe, I anſwer, No—If they aſk me to repeal the revolution, I anſwer—No—or the liberty that came with it, or the glory that followed it, or the maxims of Commerce and of Government that have cheriſhed and adorned them both—I continue to anſwer, by a reiterated negative. I confide that you will do the ſame, and I conclude.

F I N I S.